

*The Core
of
America's
Race Problem*

*Edited by
Dorothy J. Height*

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Dorothy I. Height

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

THE request came from several organizations to make available to the general public the material now in this pamphlet which first appeared as a mimeographed bulletin issued by the Public Affairs Committee of the National Board, YWCA. *The Core of America's Race Problem*, therefore, is presented herewith in printed form.

Available resources on the phenomenon of segregation are summarized briefly against the ideals and structure of American democracy as background. The summary is by no means an exhaustive analysis of segregation in American life. Rather, it is offered as a guide for study and action. The suggested readings are vital to a fuller understanding of the problem; those excerpts which are here included are but keys to the original documents.

Those who would use this material will find it helpful to have in hand *An American Dilemma** by Gunnar Myrdal and *Patterns of Negro Segregation** by Charles S. Johnson. In addition to these basic larger works the bulletins of the National Urban League and other publications listed are essential for a better understanding of the problem. The Race Relations Department of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America† and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People‡ offer other excellent resources.

*For publishers and prices of all references mentioned in this pamphlet, see "Reading List" on page 30.

†297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

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INTRODUCTION

BECAUSE Negroes are the largest racial minority in this country and suffer more kinds of inequality than any other minority in the United States, this pamphlet discusses segregation as it relates to the Negro in American life. The solution of the problem of segregation in Negro-white relationships is essential to the solution of the problem as it relates to other minorities whether racial, religious, cultural or economic.

America is the refuge of peoples of different backgrounds who have come to its shores in search of freedom and equality of opportunity. Americans believe that "all men are created equal" and from that creation as equals they derive rights inherent and "unalienable" among which are the preservation of "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness". (Declaration of Independence.)

This creed has its roots both in democracy and in Christianity. Those who would be democratic or Christian cannot escape the study of the problem of segregation which threatens the integrity of our American life.

DO WE BELIEVE IN EQUALITY?

"The core of Hitler's faith is a racial doctrine. The core of the faith of the Japanese imperialists is another racial doctrine. The Nazis and the Japanese are out to dominate the world, because they honestly disbelieve in racial equality.

"That is why we of the United Nations can no longer dodge that question. We dodged it for many years before the war. But now it is squarely before us, and we have to make up our minds one way or the other. Do we believe in racial equality, or don't we?

"If we don't, we agree with our enemies. We are fighting fascism but we accept the basic principles of fascism.

"If we do, then it is not enough to say so. If we say one thing, and do the opposite, people all over the world will scorn us as hypocrites.

“Apart from the war, there is another thing to remember. We are Christians—or are we? Christianity stands for human brotherhood. And how can men be brothers if they cannot use the same hotel, work in the same factory, live on the same side of the railway tracks, pray in the same church? How can Christians hope to persuade the rest of the world of their sincerity unless they can practice at least as much of human brotherhood and equality as, for example, the Russian communists?” (Written by Gregory Vlastos especially for the World-Wide Observance of Business Girls of the YWCA)

We see signs like these in many places in America today—either imprinted or implied:

WHITE

colored

They challenge us to examine our ways of living in the light of our stated beliefs. America’s beauty is marred so long as these signs highlight her “unfinished business”. Let us look into some major aspects of American life and see how segregation operates.

Segregation of Negroes has been defined as the enforced setting apart of people on the basis of race and color, the denial of participation in public, quasi-public, semi-public institutions and activities whether such denial is by legal means or by custom.

The Constitution of the United States says:
Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude . . . shall exist within the United States . . . ; (Amendment XIII)

All persons born or naturalized in the United States . . . are citizens. . . . *No state* shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States . . . ; (Amendment XIV)

The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of race, color, or previous condition or servitude. (Amendment XV)

The Fourteenth Amendment declared the Negro a citizen. In order to establish Jim Crow in the face of these Constitutional Amendments, the southern whites coined a term which is expressed or implied in most Jim Crow statutes, "separate, but equal". To achieve their purpose of separation from whites, they promised equal accommodations to Negroes. A careful study of transportation or education in the South reveals a glaring example of how segregation results in discrimination.

INSTITUTIONAL SEGREGATION

All southern states and most border states have state laws and municipal regulations which prohibit Negroes from using the same schools, libraries, parks, playgrounds, railroad cars, railroad stations, sections of streetcars and buses, hotels, restaurants and other facilities as do white people. In recent years the Supreme Court has become increasingly prepared to observe the intent of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. Accordingly, it has rendered an increasing number of decisions which expose the statutes backing the system of institutional segregation as unconstitutional.

In the North there are no Jim Crow laws. Yet, there is institutional segregation. Many institutions such as schools, clinics, hospitals, parks, playgrounds, theaters and other places of amusement have a community basis and, therefore, residential segregation is an effective means of getting separate units for Negroes. Residential segregation is the main cause of institutional segregation in the North. ✕

Eighteen northern states have Civil Rights laws. These laws are not always enforced, and there are ways of getting around them. However, their very existence makes institutional segregation a qualitatively different problem in the North from the legally entrenched segregation in the South.

In the northern states, even where there are Civil Rights laws which provide that no person should be denied service, accommodation or the use of facilities because of race, creed, color or national origin, devices have been used to keep Negroes from using facilities without violating the letter of the law. The methods used are subtle. For example:

A Negro couple went into a restaurant in New York and seated themselves at a table. For a few moments they continued their conversation. After a while they realized that persons who had

entered after their arrival were served. They remained calm even when the waiter came to them twenty-five minutes later. He gave them a menu after they insisted upon having one. During the same period the waiter was courteously and quickly serving others at tables near-by while this couple waited indefinitely. Almost an hour after their order was taken the waiter brought the food. They left the restaurant two hours after arrival with the realization that the restaurant had made every effort to make them walk out without being served.

A Negro girl found it necessary to stay overnight in Chicago while en route to the West Coast. In the station she telephoned a hotel in the Loop and was assured accommodations. When she reached the hotel the clerk seemed quite shocked. He consulted several persons and then returned to tell her there was no room left in the hotel. She told her story but the clerk held firm to his statement and said there must have been a mistake. She sat in a seat quite near the desk and saw two white persons request and receive rooms without previous reservations. Hers was the problem of finding a place where a Negro American could stay that night.

In a first-class restaurant which has a fountain service in New York City, two Negro college students stopped for a light lunch. They were quickly served. Before they left their seats at the fountain the attendant broke the dishes they had used before their eyes. The students and others at the fountain recognized this as an insulting protest against serving them because they were Negroes.

Individuals and groups mold opinion:

Often we hear persons say, "What can I do? I'm just one person!" There is a great deal that one person can do to foster or to break down segregation. We all know how the actions of an individual or group help or hinder progress in breaking down barriers. For instance:

A Negro youth leader was invited to speak at a white church in a New Jersey town. She arrived early and sat in a pew near the rear of the church. A woman sitting in the pew uttered a few words of protest, took her two children by the hand and moved to another section. Other members came and quickly turned from their customary seats to new sections.

A YWCA cafeteria revised its policy and welcomed Negro patrons. At the outset there were white patrons who threatened to withdraw if Negroes were served. Some individuals stopped at the desk and complained to the clerk. The YWCA upheld its policy, and patrons of all races now appreciate its service.

A Negro secretary-stenographer answered a call to work in Washington. She had passed the Civil Service examination and was both qualified and efficient. When she was assigned to a unit for work she was abruptly rejected by a government official who refused to work with a Negro secretary.

The manager of a restaurant in New York says that he instructs his waiters to be particularly courteous to Negro patrons because he feels responsible to counteract the discomfort they may often feel from the stares or insults of individual white patrons.

It is astonishing to note the extent to which white patrons stare and seem surprised at the presence of Negroes in public places, even in the North.

What are the problems of minorities in institutions in your community? Is there a Civil Rights law in your state? What does it cover? How can it be enforced? What can be done collectively to secure a Civil Rights law in your state? How can Jim Crow laws be eliminated?

Read and Discuss:

An American Dilemma,* Gunnar Myrdal, Volume I, Chapter 29.
Patterns of Negro Segregation, Charles S. Johnson, Chapter 1.

"To Secure for Negroes Their Basic Civil Rights", *Public Affairs Bulletin* No. 2, Series 7.

A Guide for Study and Action, a suggested draft for states' civil rights laws.

HOUSING

The segregation of racial, religious and cultural minorities in housing is a number one problem in American life today. The housing of Negroes in any town is a complex of low income, neighborhood restriction and housing shortage, with resultant overcrowding, congestion and blight. The following is a typical sampling of comparison of the average income for Negro and white families as shown in the *Study of Consumer Purchases*, Urban Series, 1935-36, Vol. I, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

*For publishers and prices of all references mentioned in this pamphlet, see "Reading List" on page 30.

	<i>Negro Families</i>	<i>White Families</i>
New York City	\$980	\$1,930
Chicago	726	1,687
Columbus, Ohio	831	1,622
In small towns in Mississippi, Georgia, and the Carolina's	330 (median income)	1,220 (median income)

It is a well-known fact that, whether in the North or South, Negroes receive low wages and work at jobs that yield salaries far from commensurate with present-day living costs. Despite this fact, Negroes are compelled to spend a larger proportion of their earning for housing than for food or all other necessities put together.

Because of residential restrictions Negroes do not have full access to the housing market. Therefore they encounter disadvantages resulting from the element of monopoly involved. The majority of housing available to Negroes has been described as physically unsafe or makeshift. A small amount of sound rental housing has been made available to Negroes through public housing units and some private developments such as the "Rosenwald Apartments", Chicago, "The Paseo", Kansas City, Missouri.

Negroes are forced to fill their homes with roomers in order to pay the exorbitant rents. The result is overcrowding. Even those who attempt to purchase their own homes often face this same necessity because of low incomes.

If Negroes wish to buy outside segregated areas they must combat *racial restrictive covenants*. In essence, a restrictive covenant is an agreement signed by home owners in a neighborhood with the understanding that no signer will ever sell his home to Negroes or other designated minorities. The constitutionality of covenants is not easily challenged in the courts because the covenants evolve around the property rights of the signees.

Residential segregation thus operates against Negroes of all income groups and, in its ultimate effect, against the whole community.

Racial restrictive covenants are a community menace and serve to undo property standards. They prevent what would otherwise be an orderly and normal expansion of people in need of more living space. Dr. Robert C. Weaver suggests that occupancy standards be substituted for restrictive covenants when he says:

"If, instead of restrictions on account of race, creed and color, there were agreements binding property owners not to sell or lease except to single families, barring excessive roomers and otherwise dealing with the type of occupancy, properties would be protected during both white and Negro occupancy . . ."

—From statement by Robert C. Weaver quoted in
"Racial Problems in Housing",
National Urban League Bulletin No. 2

Many find it difficult to agree with Dr. Weaver because they are influenced by traditional racial stereotypes which make them unprepared to acknowledge either that Negroes are capable of observing occupancy standards, or that they can live normally side by side with whites.

The reports of the Federal Public Housing Agency demonstrate the fact that, in the housing projects, Negro and white low-income families who had lived in the slums maintained their new homes in creditable manner.

Both in northern and southern communities Negro and white families live amicably side by side. In Georgia, Alabama and other southern states, Negroes and white families can be found who have lived amicably side by side for generations.

The National Urban League reminds us that residential segregation is relatively new in American community life. It was scarcely known before 1910.

Segregation in housing is expensive both in taxpayers' money and in racial amity. It is detrimental to normal community development and usually establishes a pattern which results in segregation in other institutions and social services.

"At some point down the road, America is going to accept the fact that healthy social growth depends upon elimination of biracialism. What is important today is that those who plan housing for tomorrow will read the signs of the future correctly and not complicate the housing and other social problems for coming generations."

—"Racial Problems in Housing", page 16
National Urban League Bulletin No. 2

Housing presents a problem to every city in the country. No city has adequate housing for its total population. Negroes have even a greater problem because segregation and discriminatory practices keep what housing there is inaccessible to them. We find the following examples given in "Racial Problems in Housing":

"In Chicago—racial restrictive covenants and adverse neighborhood pacts cover 85 per cent of the city's property, obstructing both rental and purchase of houses by Negroes.

"In Baltimore—Negroes, who are 20 per cent of the population, are crammed into 2 per cent of the residential areas.

"On the West Coast—In the Central and North Pacific Areas . . . there is noticeable hostility toward in-migrants . . . particularly Negro. . . . There are reports of subtle efforts to withhold necessary community adjustments so that they will not be attracted to remain permanently.

"In the Buckeye Road section of Phoenix, Arizona, Negroes, Mexicans and Indians, many of whom were imported as cotton pickers, live in blocks of huts built from miscellaneous pieces of wood and tin.

"In Los Angeles—the Little Tokyo District which, before the war, housed 7,000 Japanese, now houses 30,000 Negroes.

"In the Nation's Capital—living conditions of the masses of Negroes were described as 'so deplorable that they constitute a widely publicized national disgrace'."

Get the facts about housing in your community. What are the causes of segregated areas? What must public and private housing do to provide housing and improve housing standards? What can you do to interpret the facts about housing for minorities and the truth about Negroes as tenants?

The following quotation describes some of the records of Negroes as tenants in public housing units:

"A 1942 Public Housing survey of 46,582 dwellings, of which Negro families occupied 20,426, revealed the rent-paying record between the two groups as similar and that the slight difference in record favored projects occupied by Negro tenants. Further, that definitely the determinant was sound management."

Corinne K. Robinson

Federal Public Housing Agency, 1943

wholly be denied without serious boomerang on those who would impede it."

—"Employment Problems of the Negro"
National Urban League Bulletin No. 1

The Myrdal study found, for example, that in Miami, Florida, it has been impossible to use Negroes in skilled or semiskilled work since there is a city ordinance forbidding their employment in such occupations outside the Negro section.

Laws on industrial segregation have been passed by North Carolina, Texas and South Carolina. "The legislature has found it desirable to segregate the races in cotton textile factories. This act denies the two races the use of the same means of entrance and exit at the same time, the same pay windows, stairways, lavatories or drinking utensils." (*The Legal Status of the Negro*, Charles S. Mangum, page 175)

Read:

"Employment Problems of the Negro", *National Urban League Bulletin* No. 1

"Fair Employment Practice", *Public Affairs Bulletin* No. 4, Series 8

How would a Permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission with enforcement powers assure equal work opportunity?

UNIONS

The American Federation of Labor has nineteen member unions which refuse membership to Negroes. It is to be noted that almost all the Negro-excluding unions are either AFL or independent railroad brotherhoods.

These unions exclude Negroes either by constitutional provision or in their rituals. Eleven of these have real importance from the standpoint of barring Negroes from jobs. They are: the Boilermakers, the Machinists, the Commercial Telegraphers, the Railroad Telegraphers, the Railway Mail Clubs, the Railway Clubs, the Freight Handlers, the Switchmen, the Firemen and Enginemen, the Trainmen, the Conductors and the Locomotive Engineers.

Five others exclude Negroes by tacit agreement: the Electricians, the Plumbers and Steamfitters, the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers, the Granite Cutters and the Flint Glass Workers.

Other craft unions segregate Negroes by giving them auxiliary status. Thus the Negro workers are organized as separate units,

have the privilege of paying dues, but have no say in the organization, no voice in union affairs. They do not have the right to bargain collectively but submit their grievances to the officers of the "regular" (white) local who present their cases for them.

Many watched with disappointment the failure of the AFL convention of November, 1944, to adopt the nondiscriminatory resolutions presented by the Negro minority leaders.

The CIO from its very beginning has followed the principle that Negro and white workers should be organized together. Many of the new unions have made a courageous start in worker's education and an important element of this education is to spread the principle of universal labor solidarity and to combat racial prejudice. The CIO has established a Committee to Abolish Racial Discrimination which operates as an integral part of the CIO machinery.

Why do some AFL unions oppose legislation for a Permanent FEPC with enforcement powers? Inquire from members of these unions whom you know. Discuss the problem in your groups.

EDUCATION

In 1930, the average expenditure for every pupil throughout the nation was \$99.00. The expenditure for white children in the South was \$44.31, less than half the national average. The expenditure for Negro children was \$12.57, only one-quarter that of every southern white child and about one-eighth that of the average pupil in the nation as a whole. Not only are the funds appropriated by the state for the education of Negro children less than they are entitled to, but the county and local district boards often discriminate further and divert to white schools a large proportion of those already inadequate funds.

Seventeen states and the District of Columbia have laws establishing two complete sets of schools—one for Negroes and one for whites. This dual system is costly as it calls for separate facilities, teachers, pupil supplies, etc. The entire community must bear the burden of the cost which, in most cases, is far in excess of that which one set of schools would require.

The chief inequality in education in America lies in this system of separate schools for the two races. These are some of the ways the inequalities operate:

Less money is spent per capita for Negro children than for white children;

Equipment in Negro schools is less adequate and usually inferior in quality to that in white schools;

The school term for Negro children is often shorter than that for white children.

The most spectacular example of inequality in per-capita expenditure for education is that of Mississippi where the money expended for white children is about nine times as great as that expended for Negro children, although Negroes are 49 per cent of the population.

In the majority of segregated schools there is a differential between the salaries paid to white and Negro teachers who perform the same duties. During recent years the NAACP, acting upon requests from individual teachers who were willing to make theirs test cases, has taken this inequality before the court with reasonable success. The result has been the equalization of salaries in localities in thirteen states.

A glaring example of the results of a dual educational system was shown a few years ago when the DAR denied Marian Anderson the use of Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., for a concert. Her management appealed to the Board of Education of the District of Columbia for the use of the white high school auditorium. Because of the possibility of a Negro audience the Board interpreted the law and dual system to mean that the white high school auditorium could not be used by members of the Negro race and that the Negro high school auditorium could not be used by white people. Despite protests, the Board held firm to its decision. The Secretary of the Interior invited Marian Anderson to sing on Easter Sunday in the outdoors on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial; 75,000 persons of all races came from all parts of the country to hear her.

In sixteen states there is not a single institution where a Negro student may pursue graduate or professional work. Yet all these states provide state-supported universities offering graduate and professional courses to white students.

In the North, Negro students theoretically have the right to attend the same schools, colleges and universities, and under the same conditions as white students. In practice, however, they suffer discrimination ranging from petty annoyances to complete exclusion. Some northern colleges accept only one or two Negroes each year. Many professional schools will not admit Negroes.

Despite prohibiting state laws, some states, such as California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Illinois, have excluded Negro students from public schools in the southern sections of these states and set up separate schools for their education. These segregated schools are usually inferior to white schools in the community.

"The richest resources of a nation are its people. We cannot exist as a democratic nation half educated and half ignorant any more than we could exist half slave and half free."

*The Black and White of Rejections
for Military Service, pages 46-47*

How would Federal Aid to Education help equalize educational opportunity? Discuss the relation between educational opportunity and higher rates of Army rejections due to less than fourth-grade education.

Read:

The Black and White of Rejections for Military Service, American Teachers Association Studies

Selective Service Reports, Volume IV., No. 5, May 1944

TRANSPORTATION

The "separate but equal" theory is carried over into segregation of the races on public conveyances—trains, streetcars and buses.

The Jim Crow law of the State of Kentucky is typical of such laws. It specifies that all railroads must furnish separate coaches or cars for Negroes and whites; that each compartment or coach divided by substantial wood partitions shall be deemed "separate"; that each unit must bear the name of the race for which it is intended; that there must be no discrimination in the quality or con-

veniences of the accommodations and, should any passenger refuse to occupy the unit to which he is assigned, the conductor may put him off the train.

Most southern cities enforce segregation in streetcars and buses. The practice is to seat Negroes at the rear of the car and whites at the front. In theory, segregation in transportation means "separate but equal". In practice, the Negro suffers. Negro accommodations are usually inferior and insufficient. No matter how many Negroes ride and how few white persons, all the Negroes must be crowded into the limited space set aside for them. The rear part of the baggage car is frequently made the coach "for Negroes". Because it is placed immediately behind the engine it gets most of the smoke and cinders. The Jim Crow car serves as the Negro's smoker and dining car. The news vendor and the conductor often occupy two of the all too few seats for the arrangement of wares or for clerical work. Although there may be plenty of seats in other coaches, Negroes, even mothers with children, must stand when there are no longer any seats available in the restricted quarters.

Witness the vivid contrast in the accommodations in waiting rooms in stations. The Negro waiting room is usually inferior in both facilities and sanitary service. A traveler in the South often sees an elaborate restaurant on the "white side" and a miserable stand of hot foods on the "Negro side". Negroes must wait until all requests on the "white side" have been met before the ticket agent gives attention to the "Negro side", in places where one agent serves through a "two-faced" office.

Even the Negro who can afford it must have courage to travel by Pullman through the South. There have been instances in which educated, cultured and refined persons have been beaten or thrown from the trains, or have suffered other indignities at the hands of railroad officials who have taken the spirit of Jim Crow laws into their own hands.

RECREATION

Negroes are excluded from general public parks in all southern cities except Richmond, where they are restricted in the use of facilities. In Nashville, there are several small Negro parks located near the large Negro communities. However, Negroes who are 28 per cent of the population have only 1 per cent of the total park area.

In border states and in some northern cities, Negroes are restricted to specified swimming pools, sections of beaches, tennis courts and other playground equipment usually situated in one section of the park, while play facilities for white people are in the opposite section.

What about playgrounds and other recreational facilities in your community? Do Negroes and other minorities have representation on the policy-making bodies which plan community facilities?

Negroes are generally segregated in theaters in the South where there is usually a section reserved for them. The practice varies, however, in many cities, particularly in border and northern states. In Washington, D.C., for instance, Negro persons are not admitted to the white theaters at all. They are restricted to Negro theaters in the Negro neighborhoods. An exception is sometimes made when the Negro person shows by language or dress he is a foreigner. Many northern cities operate theaters without any form of segregation.

In other cities, managers subtly segregate by selling tickets for certain sections of the theater to Negroes only. After Negroes are seated they look about and realize that they have been grouped together.

There are many health and amusement resorts in northern areas which restrict their patronage to white persons only.

THE ARMED FORCES

The War Department has announced that, as of September 30, 1944, there were 701,678 Negroes in the Army. Of this number, 411,368 are on overseas duty. The total number is distributed as follows:

49,483	Infantry
36,302	Coast and Field Artillery
867	Cavalry
133,180	Engineers
73,686	Air Forces
408,160	Other Branches
5,804	Negroes hold commissions

Segregation in the armed forces has greatly aroused public concern. The Army takes the position that, since it did not create the race problem, it cannot undertake to change the views of the citizens who fill its ranks. With the exception of white officers who are serving with Negro troops, segregation in the Army is total—that is, Negroes are assigned, trained, drilled, housed, etc., in separate units. The exception is made in the policy of officer training which is thoroughly interracial. Negro and white officer candidates train, eat and live together with great success in all officers' training schools, even in Fort Benning, Georgia.

Segregation in the armed forces has far-reaching results. Most Negro troops are designated for service rather than combat units. Promotion of Negro officers beyond the rank of lieutenant are drastically restricted. There is only one training school for Negro combat pilots—the segregated establishment at Tuskegee, Alabama. Equipment, standards, instructors and students match anything the Army has elsewhere. But at the rate of training and graduation this school affords, opportunity is not provided for even a fair percentage of Negroes who wish to contribute to this important arm of the service, to do so.

Experience indicates that the Army respects the existence of Jim Crow and carefully sidetracks the solution of the problem of segregation which has been transferred from the less desirable, undemocratic practices in civilian life to its own organization.

Should aid and comfort be given our foes by the very pattern of organization of our armed forces?

"Hitler has stated that he learned how to treat racial minorities from the way the United States treats Negroes. While the treatment of minorities under the Fuehrer goes far beyond anything to be found in this country today, the partial truth on which he based his statement is proclaimed to our enemies when they see the segregated pattern of our Army and Navy. The United States sends 'two armies', a black army and a white army, forward to fight in unity for democracy!!

"To the brown- and yellow-skinned peoples of the Pacific and Far East, the segregated pattern of our armed forces proclaims us hypocritical and creates distrust of our country. It is difficult for even our Chinese Ally to believe we are united with them on an equal basis when our whole racial policy shows we have by no means relinquished the old myth of white supremacy.

"An incident that happened in the Punjab the first year of the war illustrates how confused some of our Allies are about our racial attitudes. The Mohammedan Governor of one of the Indian Provinces invited the officers of the United Nations stationed there to an official garden party. Dutch, English and Americans accepted the invitation. A short while before the party the white American officers sent word to the Governor that they would not come if he received the American Negro officers. The dark-skinned Mohammedan Governor and his people were much confused. 'We thought America was a democracy fighting for democracy,' he said, 'but now we don't know what to think.'"

—*Jim Crow Joins Up*, Ruth Danenhower Wilson, pages 118-119

Negro women were admitted into the WAC from its inception. Their service has been developed on the same plan of segregation which is characteristic of Negro troops in the Army. It was not until October 1944, that the Navy revised its policy and accepted Negro women. Negro women have been integrated into the WAVES on a basis worthy of extension to all branches of the armed forces.

The Army has reversed its attitude toward Negro nurses and has now integrated them in all the service commands. Although Negro nurses have not been called in as large numbers as many had hoped, 440 were in Army service as of May 1, 1945. Their assignments are not limited to the South. Negro members of the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps have been assigned to military hospitals in Illinois, Massachusetts and New Jersey. The Navy, likewise, has reversed its policy. Today there are five Negro nurses integrated into the Navy.

Negro service men have suffered hardships because of the lack of respect for the Army uniform outside the fort. Many of them spend their leisure hours at the fort because of threats to their lives by residents in near-by towns. Segregation in transportation often makes it impossible for them to get to town as white service men are admitted first, and if they fill the bus the Negro soldier must wait, often for hours, until he can get a place on the bus.

Incidents which are rooted in racial prejudice occur, and all these affect not only the morale of men in uniform but of their families and friends on the home front. As results of incidents at Fort Bragg and in Wilmington, North Carolina, Undersecretary of War Patterson pointed out in an NBC broadcast on August 13, 1941:

"There is nothing exclusive about the war that is flaming on three continents. Let me remind you that an aerial bomb draws no color line."

How would the abolition of segregation in our armed forces square with our national professions of "liberty and justice for all"?

Read:

Jim Crow Joins Up, Ruth Danenhower Wilson

"What the Negro Soldier Thinks", Grant Reynolds, *The Crisis*,
December 1944

"The Negro's War", *Fortune Magazine*, June 1942

A Rising Wind, Walter White

THE BLOOD BANK

Segregation in the armed forces has set the pattern which is followed by the American Red Cross in the administration of the Blood Bank. At the beginning of the war the Red Cross would not accept blood donations from Negroes at all. Protests of Americans of all races brought forth the official reply of the Red Cross which stated shift in policy to accepting but segregating the blood of Negroes when it said, in January 1942, "The blood will be preserved separately so that those receiving transfusions may be given plasma from the blood of their own race." This policy was reaffirmed by the Director of the American Red Cross in February 1945.

Thus, the Army and Navy insist that the Red Cross segregate the blood of Negroes despite the fact that there is no scientific basis for such segregation.

Is there a difference in the blood of Negro and white people?

Medical science answers:

"Numerous chemical and seriological investigations have yielded no evidence that the blood of one race can be distinguished from that of another. . . . The transfusion of Negro blood into white persons and that of white persons into Negroes has been repeatedly performed in civil practice without any evidence of harm or aversion on the part of the recipients. . . . The segregation of the blood of white persons from the blood of Negroes in the blood bank is not only unscientific but is a grievous affront to the largest minority in our country. . . ."

—*Journal of the American Medical Association*, July 4, 1942

Do you protest the segregation of the blood of Negroes as you give your blood?

MEDICAL CARE

The general pattern of segregation in hospitals requires the isolation of Negro patients from contact with white patients. Many hospitals do not accept or administer to Negro patients. Negroes seriously injured in automobile accidents, while passing through small southern towns, have often been refused even emergency treatment at hospitals. One of the most tragic examples is that of Juliette Derricotte, internationally known educator, social leader and former national YWCA student secretary who died as a result of refusal of medical care by a white hospital after injuries in an accident in Dalton, Georgia.

In both urban centers and rural areas, segregation results in neglect of the health of Negro citizens. In rural sections, particularly in the South, there are towns and even whole counties without any facilities for medical care for Negroes.

Many hospitals will not permit Negro doctors to treat their patients there. There are some northern cities which give Negro doctors a chance to follow up their Negro cases in hospitals.

Make a list of the facilities which your committee deems a minimum for the health protection and cultural development of people in a community. Are all these available to Negroes? Do they discriminate against Negroes?

Facts like these reflect the problem of health facilities for Negroes in the United States as of 1940:

FOR NEGROES

- 1 hospital for each 107,000 persons
- 1 hospital bed for each 1,000 persons
- 1.1 bed available to each physician
- In *Mississippi*—65 hospital beds for 1,000,000, or 1 for each 16,000
- In *Texas*—less than 200 beds for 850,000, or 1 for every 4,200

FOR WHITES

- 1 hospital for each 19,000 persons
- 1 hospital bed for each 110 persons
- 7 beds available to each physician
- In *Mississippi*—8,000 for slightly less than 1,000,000, or 1 for each 125
- In *Texas*—28,000 beds for 4,000,000, or 1 for each 140

In the South, approximately 11,000 Negroes die from tuberculosis each year, and there are only 2,000 beds available for their care.

In 1939, in the rural South, less than 1 per cent of Negro babies were delivered in hospitals and about 80 per cent delivered by midwives alone.

MORTUARY SERVICES

"Very rigid segregation exists in taking care of the dead; there are parallel funeral establishments and cemeteries in all parts of the South. In one state the health code prohibits Negro morticians from handling white bodies."

". . . There are occasional exceptions to this general rule and some white undertakers take Negro business. Some small establishments actually seek it. Exceptions are sometimes made for prominent Negroes."

"It was once customary for Negroes attached to white families to be buried in the same cemeteries, but in some instances Negro bodies have been removed, years afterward, to Negro cemeteries."

—*Patterns of Negro Segregation*, Charles S. Johnson, page 77

Even in the North cemeteries are usually segregated.

HOW SEGREGATION BECAME A PATTERN

That the slave was inferior as a human being, was a principle inherent in the institution of slavery. He was allowed some indulgences but could claim nothing as a right or privilege. His paternalistic master determined all phases of his life.

In a slave society a rather complete separation of the Negro group was enforced as a matter of routine. Slaves were closely regimented in the interest of exploiting their labor and hindering their escape. As the Underground Railroad and the Abolitionist Movement grew stronger, the regimentation became increasingly strict. This regimentation almost entirely prevented social contacts between the slaves and the whites who had no slaves. The slaves on large plantations were in contact with only their overseer and sometimes the master of his family. Even the free Negroes in the South were forced into social isolation.

In a slave society, white people did not and could not accept the

slaves as their social equals. The slaves had their own religious activities, separate living quarters, amusements and recreation. When they were allowed to attend a religious service in the presence of white people, they had a segregated place in the church. It was forbidden by law to teach the slaves to read. Their travel was closely restricted. These were some of the ways in which the patterns of segregation grew in a slave society.

Since these early beginnings segregation has become a national rather than a sectional problem. Whatever emphasis has been placed upon the South in this pamphlet, is based upon the valid recognition that segregation is most prevalent in that section where the largest number of Negroes yet live.

The Emancipation Proclamation dealt the final blow to slavery as an institution. In addition to the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, Congress passed the Civil Rights Bill of 1875 which explicitly declared that all persons within the country were entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges of inns, public conveyances on land and water, theaters and other places of public amusement; subject only to the condition and limitations established by law, and applicable to citizens of every race and color regardless of previous condition of servitude. The bitterness which remained after the war made the South hostile to the Congress for attempting in Reconstruction to eliminate social discrimination from public life. "Keep the Negro in his place" soon became a regional slogan and the doctrine of "white supremacy" was spread.

In 1883, the Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Law of 1875 unconstitutional because it prohibited social discrimination by individuals. This opened the way for Jim Crow legislation which the southern states and municipalities rapidly passed. The real purpose of these laws was to reduce and eliminate, if possible, contacts between white and colored persons in the South. They held to the spirit and pattern of the slave society which the Civil War and Emancipation destroyed.

Although the Civil Rights Law of 1875 was declared unconstitutional, the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, adopted during Reconstruction, could not be erased from the supreme law of the land. These amendments gave the Negro his basic civil rights, declared him a citizen entitled to enjoy full citizenship in the United States, assured him "equal

benefit of all laws” and provided that “no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States”.

“Again the southern white man is in the moral dilemma of having to frame his laws in terms of equality and to defend them before the Supreme Court—and before his own better conscience, which is tied to the American creed—while knowing all the time that in reality his laws do not give equality to Negroes, and that he does not want them to do so. . . . Potentially the Negro is strong. He has, in his demands upon white Americans, the fundamental law of the land on his side. He has even the better consciences of his white compatriots themselves. He knows it, and the white American knows it, too.”

—*An American Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal,
Volume I, pages 581-582

What attitude toward Negroes is reflected in the saying, “The South is yet fighting the Civil War”? What are the causes of the spread of segregation to all parts of the country? What possibilities for changing Jim Crow laws do you see through the history of the development of these present laws? What can you do to interpret them?

“This war is a fight between a slave world and a free world. Just as the United States in 1862 could not remain half slave and half free, so in 1942 the world must make its decisions for a complete victory one way or the other.”

—Henry A. Wallace

Read:

Patterns of Negro Segregation, Charles S. Johnson

The Legal Status of the Negro, Charles S. Mangum

An American Dilemma, Gunnar Myrdal, Volume I, Chapters
28, 29

Study the efforts of church leaders to abolish segregation in worship.

Read:

To End This Day of Strife

Negro Churchmen Speak to White Churchmen

Your Community and Its Unity

Issued by the Federal Council of Churches

SEGREGATION AFFECTS WHITES, TOO

The Myrdal study clearly revealed that segregation and discrimination have had material and moral effects on white people, too. In both the South and the North, observers have corroborated Booker T. Washington's remark that the white man could not hold the Negro in the gutter without getting in there himself.

"In whatever form slavery may be perpetuated, just so far will it put shackles on the minds of southern whites. If we treat the Negro unjustly, we shall practice fraud and injustice to each other. We shall necessarily live by the standards of conduct we apply to him. This is the eternal curse of wrong and injustice, a curse that abides on the ruler as well as the slaves. The South will be free only as it grants freedom."

—Chancellor Kirkland

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee

Read:

"The Effects of Social Inequality", Chapter 30, in *An American Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal

The Black and White of Rejections for Military Service, American Teachers Association Study

ARE NEGROES "HAPPIEST AMONG THEMSELVES"?

The Myrdal study revealed the fact that when Negro and white people are kept apart, the wish for separation is as pronounced among Negroes as among white people. The fear of the new and the struggle against custom are equally difficult for all peoples, regardless of race, and are often used as a justification for segregation. We must look deeply and see that even when Negroes congregate themselves it is a position forced upon them by the attitude of the white group. It is essentially an escape mechanism. To Negroes, the intimate social life and opportunities for developing a group leadership or to achieve a group culture are subordinate goals to the achievement of respect and equality of opportunity as persons assuming full responsibility in the economic, social and political life of the nation. Inequalities, injustices, indignities forced upon persons because of race, creed, color, do not breed "happiness".

An example of the difference in lines of thought on segregation is

reflected in the reaction of the Governor of Alabama and a group of 250 Negro ministers in Alabama, in August 1944, after the War Department announced its order banning segregation in the use of certain facilities on Army Posts:

The Governor of Alabama wired the President:

"I protest such an order which violates a state-wide practice and belief and aggravates rather than helps. . . . It breaks down an essential principle of race relationships in the South and grievously handicaps those of us who are trying to bring about a better relationship between the two races and an improvement of both on equal basis."

The Birmingham Baptist Ministers Conference took this stand:

"1. *We, the Negroes of Alabama, have been law-abiding citizens, having done our part both as citizens and as soldiers, as far as we have been allowed. We realize that segregation takes away from the Negro his constitutional rights;*

"2. *Because of segregation, the Negro has been kept out of the best institutions and technical schools, thereby impairing his preparation for the armed forces of the country;*

"3. *As Negroes we believe in our democratic form of government, and we believe that true democracy should work throughout America for all people, and, therefore, we emphatically deny the statement made by anybody, anywhere, at any time, that we are satisfied with the evils of segregation."*

—*The Southern Frontier*, September 1944

Why is it that Negro individuals in the South do not speak out on this question?

Read:

What the Negro Wants, edited by Rayford Logan

"Separate but equal" has seemed to many people to mean that discrimination no longer exists. If the majority group were really interested in equal accommodations and the elimination of discrimination against Negroes, would not the reasons for segregation collapse?

Charles S. Johnson points out that unless segregation is com-

pletely mutual and voluntary it results in discrimination and that "there can be no group segregation without discrimination, and discrimination is neither democratic nor Christian." (From Chapter XV, "Retrospect and Prospect" in *Patterns of Negro Segregation*)

"NOW is not only the opportune time to liquidate the last vestiges of this system in America, but we must proceed to do so if the critical tensions already developing are not to explode, with disastrous consequences, either in the immediate future or during the postwar period."

Brothers Under the Skin, Carey McWilliams, page 299

What groups in your community are working on this problem?
How can you cooperate?

What are the next steps which your committee must take?

Read Further:

"Outline for Action", Chapter IX, in *Brothers Under the Skin*,
Carey McWilliams

The Southern Frontier, published by the Southern Regional
Council, 63 Auburn Avenue, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia

South Today, magazine published in Clayton, Georgia

READING LIST

American Dilemma, An, Gunnar Myrdal and others (Harper, 2 volumes, \$7.50)

Black and White of Rejections for Military Service, The, American Teachers Association Studies (P.O. Box 271, Montgomery, Alabama, 10 cents)

Brothers Under the Skin, Carey McWilliams (Little, Brown, \$3.00)
"Employment Problems of the Negro", *National Urban League Bulletin* No. 1 (National Urban League, 1133 Broadway, New York, N. Y., 10 cents)

"Fair Employment Practice", *Public Affairs Bulletin* No. 4, Series 8 (Woman's Press, 14 cents). The *Public Affairs Bulletins* are prepared by the Public Affairs Committee of the National Board, YWCA.

Guide for Study and Action, A (American Civil Liberties Union, 170 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., free). A memorandum in support of the draft of a state civil rights law.

Jim Crow Joins Up, Ruth Danenhowser Wilson (Press of William J. Clark, \$2.50)

Legal Status of the Negro, The, Charles S. Mangum (University of North Carolina Press, \$5.00)

Negro Churchmen Speak to White Churchmen (The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., 10 cents each, \$6.00 for 100)

Patterns of Negro Segregation, Charles S. Johnson (Harper, \$3.50)
"Racial Problems in Housing", *National Urban League Bulletin* No. 2 (10 cents)

Rising Wind, A, Walter White (Doubleday, \$2.00)

Selective Service Reports, Vol. IV, No. 5, May 1944. (Write to the national headquarters of Selective Service, Washington, D.C., for a copy of this issue.)

To End This Day of Strife (The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 6 cents each, \$1.75 for 100)

"To Secure for Negroes Their Basic Civil Rights", *Public Affairs Bulletin* No. 2, Series 7 (Woman's Press, 10 cents)

What the Negro Wants, edited by Rayford W. Logan (University of North Carolina Press, \$3.50)

Your Community and Its Unity (The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 15 cents, \$11.50 for 100)

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